

Annika Fowler
March 22, 2017

Good afternoon Chairman Perales, Ranking Member Ramos, and Members of the Ohio House Finance Subcommittee on Higher Education. Thank you for your time and allowing me to speak today about the textbook provision in House Bill 49. My name is Annika Fowler and I'm from Dublin, Ohio. I'm a first-year at Miami University double majoring in Finance and Political Science. On campus, I am a Student Senator in Associated Student Government, and I'm also involved in the Honors Student Advisory Board and the Business Student Advisory Council.

As a Student Senator, I sit on several student government committees including On-Campus Affairs, Governmental Relations, and Academic Affairs. Additionally, I have the opportunity to sit as a member of several faculty committees including University Senate (the university governing board), the Liberal Education Council, and the Academic Policy Committee. Through Student Senate and these faculty committees, I am able to listen to the concerns of the student body and share their concerns with faculty and administrators.

The rising cost of college textbooks presents a substantial financial burden for students and the university. Miami University is committed to finding affordable textbooks options for all students without sacrificing the quality of education and experience. Miami University's Student Senate has expressed concerns with the governor's proposed budget, particularly regarding the textbook proposal. We do not believe that it is in Miami University students' best interest to require institutions of higher education to pay for textbooks beyond \$300 per student. Student Senate believes the estimated \$16 million cost the proposal creates an unfunded mandate for not just our institution, but all Ohio universities. Consequently, we do not believe this proposal is the ideal way to address textbook affordability.

In response, I co-authored a resolution addressing this proposal which was unanimously passed by the Student Senate. While we support the governor's efforts to make higher

education more affordable, we do not agree with this specific plan for textbooks. The resolution states:

The Student Senate of Miami University opposes the requirement for all public schools to cover textbook costs for students beyond \$300, as this proposal does not appear to be a sufficient solution to the rising cost of textbooks.

The projected cost of this proposal for all of Miami University's campuses is \$16 million. The state is requiring universities to spend millions of dollars to implement this proposal without providing the funds to do so, thus endangering financial support for important student services and programs if schools are required to fund such a proposal. In conclusion, Student Senate does not believe the textbook proposal in the Governor's proposed budget is in the best interest of students and schools in Ohio.

On behalf of the Miami University Student Senate, I would like to thank you for your time and consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.